

REMARKS

The Office Action dated November 24, 2004, has been received and reviewed.

Claims 1-18 are currently pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application. Claims 1-5 and 7-18 stand rejected. Claim 6 has been objected to for depending from a rejected base claim.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

Please note that a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was filed in the above-referenced application on March 9, 2004, but that the undersigned attorney has not yet received any indication that the references cited in the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement have been considered in the above-referenced application. It is respectfully requested that the references cited in the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement of March 9, 2004, be considered and made of record in the above-referenced application and that an initialed copy of the Form PTO/SB/08A that accompanied that Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement be returned to the undersigned attorney as evidence of such consideration.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1-4, 7, 8, and 10-16 have been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 18 of U.S. Patent 6,017,772.

Claims 5, 9, 17, and 18 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 18 of U.S. Patent 6,017,772 in view of U.S. Patent 6,276,982.

Terminal disclaimers and the appropriate fees are being filed herewith, in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(b) and (c), to obviate the obviousness-type double patenting rejections, thereby expediting prosecution of the above-referenced application and avoiding further expense and time delay. The filing of terminal disclaimers in the above-referenced application should not be construed as acquiescence of the propriety of the obviousness-type double patenting rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indication that claim 6 is allowable is gratefully acknowledged.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-18 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing allowance of the above-referenced application remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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